

Mobility International USA (MIUSA)

Building an Inclusive Development Community: Technical Assistance to InterAction Member Agencies on Inclusion of People with Disabilities

USAID Cooperative Agreement Award No. GEW-A-00-01-00012-00

Performance Report July – September 2006

Project goals

To increase participation by people with disabilities, including women and girls, in US-based international development programs as participants, agents, administrators and consultants.

Accomplishments

A highlight of this period was the *Gender, Disability and Development Institute (GDDI)*, held August 21 to 24, 2006 in Eugene, Oregon. GDDI, which was partially supported by USAID through the Building an Inclusive Development Community (BIDC) project, was held in conjunction with MIUSA's International Women's Institute on Leadership and Development (WILD). At GDDI, representatives of US-based international development organizations joined 30 women with disabilities from southern countries for an intensive "think tank" on inclusion of women with disabilities in development. For four days at a retreat center near Eugene, Oregon, disabled women leaders and international development professionals worked together to identify issues that impact participation of women with disabilities in development efforts, explore solutions and create collaborative plans to promote inclusion of women with disabilities in development programs.

DPOs from each of the three BIDC focus countries were represented at both WILD and GDDI. Teuta Halilaj represented ADRF, our DPO partner in Albania; Isabel Escobar represented FENEDIF, our DPO partner in Ecuador; and Martha Pacay represented ASORGUA, a DPO in Guatemala. Ms. Halilaj's and Ms. Escobar's travel costs to WILD were supported with USAID funds through the BIDC project. Ms. Pacay's participation was sponsored by the Cooperative Association of States for Scholarships (CASS) program, a program of Georgetown University's Center for Intercultural Education and Development through a cooperative agreement with USAID. CASS also sponsored a delegate from Honduras. (Please see attached for a full list of participants.)

International development organizations represented at the GDDI included four of MIUSA's BIDC Model Partner Organizations: Mercy Corps, American Friends Service Committee, Trickle Up Program and Holt International. Other development organizations included the Association for the Rights of Women in Development (AWID), the Global Fund for Women, Women Pushing Forward, Whirlwind Wheelchair International, the Hesperian Foundation and CBM.

GDDI participants met over the course of the Institute in sector-specific work groups, to articulate issues, identify obstacles and generate strategies to ensure that women with disabilities are included and more effectively served in microfinance, health, education, civil society, and refugee assistance programs. All participants agreed that disabled women's organizations often do not have experience

or information necessary to effectively approach development NGOs, while NGOs are not equipped with accurate information about the issues and capacity of disabled women to respond effectively. Formal GDDI activities provided opportunities for participants on both sides to identify common interests, to gain insight into different perspectives, and to more accurately understand the constraints, goals and resources of women with disabilities and development program implementers. Informal discussions provided participants with unprecedented opportunities to establish relationships and deepen the dialogues begun in structured seminars.

A detailed report on GDDI will be published on the MIUSA website in the next quarter. Articles on GDDI written by MIUSA and GDDI participants will also be published next quarter by the following: Women's UN Report Program & Network (WUNRN); Association for Women's Rights in Development; InterAction in *Monday Developments*; *New Mobility* and MIUSA in *Global Impact*.

Technical Assistance to USAID Missions, Contractors and Disabled Peoples' Organizations (DPOs)

MIUSA communicated this quarter with Mission staff, DPO partners and USAID contractors and grantees, on outcomes and implementation of action plans from field visits completed in April through June 2006. Evaluation comments from field visits were compiled, translated and reviewed and will be incorporated into a report describing activities, results, outcomes and recommendations from the three TA field visits to be disseminated next quarter.

Following are examples of follow-on technical assistance activities and outcomes in each country this quarter:

Ecuador

- MIUSA provided information, resources, suggestions and referrals to DPO partner **FENEDIF** regarding accessibility of national elections in October.
- MIUSA provided information to **USAID/Ecuador** on how to reach, serve and assist people with disabilities in relief and emergency situation efforts, following volcanic activity in Ecuador.
- MIUSA responded to requests for technical assistance from USAID Contractors including: **Peace Corps, CARE International and the International Organization for Migration (IOM)**.

Outcomes this quarter:

- **FENEDIF** convened a meeting of the five disability Federations in Ecuador to brainstorm recommendations for MIUSA's next field visit. The group identified as a priority increased knowledge and understanding of policies and practices on inclusive development, especially in the areas of education and employment.
- FENEDIF is providing technical assistance to **Citizen Participation**, a USAID partner organization, on a USAID-sponsored voter participation project. Citizen Participation and FENEDIF have met and begun working together to address voter participation issues connected with disability access. FENEDIF is also coordinating with Citizen's Participation

and the **Supreme Electoral Tribunal (TSE)** on making the elections process accessible to people with disabilities.

- FENEDIF provided consultations and information to stakeholders involved in the development of the new international and domestic airport facility.
- **U.S. Peace Corps/ Ecuador** hired a new staff person who has a physical disability in their language teaching program. USPC/Ecuador's Safety and Security Coordinator revised their *Emergency Action Plan (EAP)* to incorporate practices that can work for everybody (staff with disabilities and clients/guests with disabilities) while in USPC/Ecuador facilities. USPC/Ecuador added a disability dimension to their youth and families training program to address disability as a diversity issue in the community.

Albania

- MIUSA provided **USAID/Albania** with recommendations for individuals with disabilities and representatives of DPOs to lead a delegation to the 9th Congress on Inclusion of Children with Special Needs, Washington DC, in December, 2006. USAID communicated this information and a recommendation to fund the initiative to **World Learning** in Albania, who manages US based education and training initiatives.
- MIUSA, in coordination with local DPO representative, **ADRF** responded to requests for technical assistance from **Coordination Action Against Human Trafficking (CAAHT)**, a USAID supported Anti-Trafficking initiative; **PRO Shendetit**, a USAID Health Initiative Implementing Partner; and the **Small Business Credit and Assistance** project.

Outcomes this quarter:

- MIUSA's DPO partner **ADRF** provided technical assistance to USAID contractor, **Partners for Albanian Microcredit (PSHM)**, to improve accessibility of PSHM facilities. ADRF staff and Miresia wheelchair workshop engineers conducted an accessibility review and designed an accessible entrance into the Tirana PSHM offices. Work is ongoing on this project.
- Partners for Albanian Microcredit (PSHM) hired a person with a disability.
- With technical assistance from ADRF, USAID contractor **Small Business Credit and Assistance (SBCA)** Project/ Albania is considering technical assistance services to Miresia, ADRF's wheelchair manufacturing workshop. ADRF also provided an outreach and communications listing of DPOs as well as specific recommendations to SBCA for individuals with disabilities who would be potential candidates to participate in the **Making Cents** training programs.
- **Pro Shendetit** disseminated information and training materials internally on inclusive development and included disability perspectives in a proposal for renewal funding to USAID.
- ADRF provided an onsite presentation for all staff and volunteers of **Coordinated Action against Human Trafficking (CAAHT)** /Albania.

- **USAID/Albania** has posted online copies of ADRF's *Challenge Magazine* for download under the tab of "Democracy and Governance".

Guatemala

MIUSA responded to requests for technical assistance from:

- **USAID / Guatemala EGAT and Communications** offices, including follow on support to Communications Officer, Ms. Wende Du Flon.
- USAID Implementing Partners including **Juarez and Associates, TechnoServe, RTI and Catholic Relief Services and CASS.**
- DPOs including **COPDIGUA, APPANE and Transitions Foundation** of Guatemala (a DPO working in Antigua.)

Outcomes this quarter:

- USAID contractor **Juarez and Associates** invited **COPDIGUA** and other DPOs to participate in an International Conference on Education Standards. Juarez arranged for sign language interpreters and accessible facilities. Juarez and Associates amended their Education Standards and Research program to include "Inclusive Education and Standards" as a core topic in all project activities. Furthermore, Juarez and Associates and USAID successfully encouraged the Guatemalan Ministry of Education to leverage additional funding for the governmental FY 2007 Inclusive Education budget. The Ministry of Education reported an increase from \$66,000 to \$1.3 million in this area. This increase will fund a new strategy for inclusive education focused on: 1) Teacher Training, 2) Awareness Campaign, 3) Increasing Coverage, 4) Strategic Alliances, and 5) Community and Parents relations.
- **USAID/Communications** office added a link on the USAID/Guatemala host country counterpart's page with CONADI; encouraged the Democracy and Governance Office to invite DPOs to an anti-corruption USAID sponsored event; forwarded the MIUSA PowerPoint presentation on women with disabilities in Development to the USAID funded **Women's Legal Rights** program; and included Sebastian Toledo's (Radio Reporter for the Association of the Blind) contact information in the USAID media outreach listing.

Next field visits

MIUSA dialogued this quarter with USAID Missions and DPO partners in each country to identify timeline, priority areas, scope of work and requisite consultant expertise for next field visits. Possible dates and tentative themes being explored include:

- **Ecuador** (possibly January 2007): focused on strengthening of DPO networks to facilitate participation of member associations in USAID sponsored projects; rural DPO development; coordination with USAID sectors, related implementing partners organizations and DPOs in a specific region.

- **Albania** (date TBD): focused on creation of a national "Disability and Development Coalition" to facilitate and monitor inclusion of people with disabilities in international development.
- **Guatemala** (date TBD): focus on strengthening capacity of DPOs to participate in development of USAID sponsored project on national educational standards, to ensure inclusion of students with disabilities, teacher training, etc.

Fourth Mission

This quarter, USAID approved MIUSA's proposal to extend the project timeline and to expand the scope of work to include a USAID Mission in a fourth country for cooperation on the project. MIUSA is conducting research in preparation for proposing a list of possible partner Missions to project CTO.

Support for Innovative Projects (Small Grants)

This quarter, MIUSA outlined a timeline and work plan for announcement of small grants RFP, review and awards. In the last quarter of 2006, MIUSA will review criteria and protocol with CTOs and participating Missions, and will select external reviewers for grant proposals.

Tentatively, criteria for small grants include the following: awards will support local Disabled People's Organizations; parent advocacy groups and initiative groups to facilitate innovative projects and collaborative initiatives that will result in an increase in inclusive practices, policies and outcomes within existing international development activities; promote collaboration among disabled people's organizations and international development agencies and organizations; and improve advocacy and leadership skills of individuals with disabilities, including women and girls with disabilities, disabled peoples' organizations and initiative groups to build capacity for participation in the development process.

Within the context above, specific priority areas will be identified for small grants in each country. Small grants competitions are expected to open in the next quarter, with awards made in January 2007. We expect activities under the Guatemala Small Grants program to be completed by December 2007.

Technical Assistance Materials and Information

Moving Toward Inclusion, a publication featuring outcomes and lessons learned from the earlier phase of the BIDC project is being posted for publication on MIUSA's website, in a downloadable format. Case studies compiled in this publication illustrate diverse strategies used by MIUSA, our partner organizations and other programs toward inclusion of people with disabilities.

ADRF will publish an article on MIUSA trainings in Albania, written by MIUSA consultant Cara Galbraith in the ADRF newsletter, with photos and appropriately branded according to USAID branding requirements.

Activities planned for next quarter

Technical assistance: Conduct follow-on activities and outline plans for second TA field trips to each country. In consultation with project CTO, select potential Missions to invite for cooperation on the project.

Small grants: Finalize protocol, guidelines, criteria and timeline for announcement, selection and administration of small grants with each Mission. Establish external review committee.

Monitoring and Evaluation: Review benchmarks and impact indicators with CTO. Review evaluation information from each technical assistance field visit; summarize outcomes and recommendations.

Dissemination: Finalize report describing activities, results, outcomes and recommendations from the three 2006 TA field visits. Plan participation in 2007 meetings with USAID personnel and other professional meetings.

Conclusion

We look forward to continuing to work closely with USAID to plan and implement intensive technical assistance to USAID Missions, USAID grantee organizations and contractors, and disabled peoples' organizations in selected countries. Thank you once again to USAID for support and cooperation to make this important work possible.

***Mobility International USA's
Third International Women's Institute on Leadership and Disability
(WILD 2006)***

August 9 – August 27, 2006 Eugene, Oregon, USA

**Anh Loan T. Luu, Vietnam
Disability Resource and Development,
Disabled Youth Association of Ho Chi Minh City**

Ms. Anh Loan T. Luu is the Director Assistant for Disability Resource and Development (DRD) at the HCMC Open University, Vietnam. She is responsible for facilitating the establishment of the club of women with disabilities and is a pioneer in the field of peer counseling for patients with spinal cord injury (SCI). Ms. Luu is also the vice-president of the Disabled Youth Association of Ho Chi Minh City. She states "Empowerment as well as advocacy skills are very new in Viet Nam, we lack information and skills to push the disability movement stronger. I would like to learn these skills to contribute in the disability movement in Vietnam." Ms. Luu is a woman with a physical disability related to Polio.

**Lalla Tahara Haidara, Mali
Association of Women with Disabilities of Tombouctou**

Ms. Lalla Tahara Haidara is the active President of the Association of Women with Disabilities of Tombouctou. She plans to increase her leadership skills to further the work of her organization, which includes micro-credit projects to benefit women with disabilities in the community. Lalla explains "to reinforce my ability to direct my organization, it is necessary that I benefit from [the WILD] workshop." Ms. Haidara is a woman with a physical disability and is a wheelchair user.

**Mabataung Khetsi, Lesotho
Lesotho National League of the Visually Impaired Persons**

Ms. Mabataung Khetsi is a the Vice President of the Lesotho National League of the Visually Impaired Persons and the mother of two boys. She provides Braille instruction for women who are Blind in the rural areas, has contributed to the Lesotho Poverty Alleviation Strategic Plan and plans to establish a small income-generating project for women with disabilities. "I wish to ensure that women and girls with disabilities in my community benefit from my participation in the WILD program through workshops and dissemination of disability information through the media." Ms. Khetsi is a self-described true advocate of the disability movement. Ms. Khetsi is a woman who is blind.

**Aracelis Guerro, Dominican Republic
Circulo de Mujeres con Discapacidades**

Ms. Aracelis Guerro works as the secretary of the Circle of Women with Disabilities and is a member of the Youth with Disabilities National Committee. She works to promote literacy for women with disabilities in urban and rural areas and recognizes the fundamental need for women with disabilities to learn the basics to fight for their rights. "I want to give women the information [from the WILD program]. I have a fervent desire to help women with disabilities that have low economic resources." Ms. Guerro is a woman who has a physical disability related to polio.

Isatou Sanyang, The Gambia**Gambian Association of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing**

Ms. Isatou Sanyang is the Director of the Female wing of the Gambian Association of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, which works for the development of Deaf women and children. Isatou teaches Gambian Sign Language to uneducated Deaf women and children, as well as income generating skills such as hairdressing, tailoring and knitting. Upon her return from WILD, Ms. Sanyang states "I will disseminate everything I learn from the conference to members of our organization. Deaf women in our community, including those with other disabilities, would benefit from my participation, as I have a pivotal role in the Female Wing of GADHOH. If my work improves, then it will be for the benefit of everyone." Ms. Sanyang is a woman who is Deaf and has a physical disability.

Ishrat Fazal, Pakistan**Society for Disabled Women**

Ms. Ishrat Fazal is the coordinator for Society for Disabled Women, which works to empower women and children with disabilities to increase their independence. She is from a rural area and advocates for protection laws for victims of sexual harassment, particularly in the rural areas. WILD will be her first international exchange experience. "I do not have experience of attending international meetings and conferences. I joined Society for Disabled Women Pakistan after my marriage and I [now have] opportunities to attend workshops and meetings on disability issues. Definitely whatever I learn from this program I will use for the welfare of disabled women in the community." Ms. Fazal is a woman with a physical disability related to polio.

Dina Moahamed Abd Elfattah, Egypt**Resala Charity Organization**

Ms. Dina Moahamed Abd Elfattah is the coordinator for the Resala Charity Organization. It is the first organization in Egypt based on volunteers and serves children who are in orphanages. Dina headed a symposium on the rights of women with disabilities in marriage and plans to increase her skills to further the human rights of women with disabilities in her society. "I want to change a lot of things in my country...I want to help us to know the criteria of this change. My country suffers from a lot of problems due to the ignorance of society, so I want to learn how I can change societies [negative] point of view towards disabled people, especially disabled women." Ms. Abd Elfattah is a woman who is blind.

Elenoa Cakacaka Lavetiviti**Fiji Disabled People's Association (FDPA)**

Ms. Elenoa Cakacaka Lavetiviti is the Administration Assistant, Advocacy Trainee and Youth Group Treasurer for the Fiji Disabled People's Association in Suva. Ms. Lavetiviti has coordinated training workshops that educate women with disabilities about their human rights, and what to do when their rights are violated or denied. Ms. Lavetiviti has not traveled outside of her home country and WILD will be her first international exchange experience. "This would be an eye-opener...I plan to use the training and experience I will have there to engage in disability development back home. I believe that everyone has a role to play. Those who have surged ahead can help those who are struggling and those who have plenty have a responsibility to give back to their communities." Ms. Lavetiviti is a woman with a physical disability and is a wheelchair user.

Yvonne Zimba, Zambia**Zambia National Association of the Physically Handicapped**

Ms. Yvonne Zimba is the Information and Gender Focal Person for the Zambia National Association of the Physically Handicapped. She coordinates all activities concerning women with disabilities and facilitates policy implementation concerning women with disabilities in the organization. "What keeps me focused is the interest I have in working with women and youth with disabilities." Ms. Zimba is a woman with a physical disability.

Camille Wilson, Jamaica**The Combined Disabilities Association**

Ms. Camille Wilson is a student in guidance counseling. She addresses High School students on how to treat individuals with disabilities and assists teenagers with disabilities in daily living. Regarding disability discrimination, she states: "I learned from a very early age that prejudice and discrimination could either hinder or motivate. I chose to be motivated." She wishes to develop her leadership skills to advocate for greater public education. Ms. Wilson is a woman with a visual disability.

Ayşe Ciklayedikci, Turkey

Ms. Ayşe Ciklayedikci is a chemist and works at BP-Turkey as the Health, Safety, Security and Environmental Technical Department Assistant. She states that she is "trying to make an effort to change prejudice on people with disabilities especially at business life. I want to improve my experience and knowledge and then share this experience with other disabled people....My life philosophy is everything starts with one step and one person can change all the world with his/her ideas." WILD will be her first international exchange experience and she hopes to set up a special Disabled Policy at BP-Turkey upon her return. Ms. Ciklayedikci is a woman with a physical disability.

Alejandra Araceli Echaitz Venegas, Chile**Instituto de Rehabilitación Infantil, TELETÓN**

Ms. Alejandra Venegas is licensed in social work, public health, and advocates for mental health for people affected by political violence and other catastrophes. She coordinates cross-disability work with children with mental disabilities in rural areas, organizes workshops, has been advocating for children with disabilities since she was eight years old. Her goals of participation in the WILD program are to change the mentality of society and to implement a program to increase social inclusion and self-esteem for people with disabilities. Ms. Echaitz Venegas is a woman with a physical disability related to a muscle disorder.

Christine Wilk, USA**Access Living**

Ms. Christine is a member with Access Living, works with Empowered Fe Fe's, YIELD the Power and Advance Youth Leadership Project and is a student in Communications and Education. She works as a mentor to empower girls with disabilities through education about their rights. Ms. Wilk would like to "take what I learn at WILD and use it in the programs I am involved with to help improve them for women and girls with disabilities." Ms. Wilk is a woman who has Cerebral Palsy.

Debbie Kennewell, Australia**Deaf Children Australia**

Ms. Debbie Kennewell works for Deaf Children Australia, Deaf Sports Recreational Victoria, as well as the Victorian Council of Deaf People. She provides services, encourages athletic inclusion, and is an advocate and youth leader to empower children who are Deaf. Through WILD training, Ms. Kennewell hopes to improve her grant writing and public speaking skills. She states: "From my participation at WILD 2006 Program, I will be more skilled and have more knowledge and experience on how to become a strong leader for the Deaf community, the community will benefit from more awareness about Deafness." Ms. Kennewell is Deaf.

Heng Lee Chin, Malaysia**Society of the Chinese Disabled Persons, Malaysia**

Ms. Heng Lee Chin works to promote dialogue with local authorities on issues of people with disabilities. She also works to raise public awareness about legislation that will hopefully raise public awareness and be granted government approval. Through WILD participation, Ms. Heng states: "I hope very much to be better empowered as a woman leader and to be able to work for a better future for all persons, in particular women with disabilities, as they have always been the source and power that leads me to always reflect on what I want to do with my life and how I should live my life more purposefully to myself and to the people around me." Ms. Heng is a woman with a physical disability and is a wheelchair user.

Ludmila Iachim, Republic of Moldova**Association Motivatie from Moldova**

Ms. Ludmila Iachim works to create equal opportunities for participation and development for people with physical disabilities, particularly wheelchair users. Upon her return from the WILD program, she "will organize seminars and trainings with young people with mobility disabilities from towns and villages based on experience gained at MIUSA." Ms. Iachim is a woman with a physical disability and is a wheelchair user.

Magally Tudith Minaya Rodriguez, Peru**Asociación de Sordociegos del Perú**

Ms. Magally Rodriguez is an active member of the Asociación de Sordociegos del Perú. This program's mission is to improve community sensitivity toward its Deaf and blind members, and Ms. Rodriguez participates by sharing her own personal challenges, and how she has overcome them. Since 1998, she has taken leadership courses in both Colombia and Peru, and works as a Special Education teacher in Lima. Ms. Rodriguez is a woman who is visually impaired and has a hearing disability.

Maria Constantin, Romania**Club Soroptimists International**

Ms. Constantin is a member of Soroptimists International, an organization that works through service projects to advance human rights for women. Through participation in WILD, she states: "I look forward to frame up an organization that will have as a goal sustaining [...] women and girls with disabilities to gain their rights and to become members active in the community's life." Ms. Constantin is a woman with Muscular Dystrophy and is a wheelchair user.

Martha Alicia Pacay, Guatemala
ASORGUA / Amigos de Coban

Ms. Martha Pacay is a teacher for the Amigos de Coban, a group which instructs Deaf children in sign language. She frequently takes part in different programs, which engage Deaf children in planned activities to both improve their usage of sign language, and increase their comfort in day to day interactions. She hopes to help eliminated discrimination of both women and the disabled in her community, as she feels unfair treatment occurs all too frequently, particularly in rural Coban. Ms. Pacay is a woman who is Deaf.

Magda Trouillot, Haiti
Healing Hands for Haiti

Ms. Magda Trouillot is the Coordinator of Cultural Exchange of the organization Healing Hands for Haiti in Bourdon. Ms. Trouillot works to expand and enhance the quality of rehabilitation services offered throughout her community; these services include clinical treatment, disability prevention and awareness education, and are intended to reach all members of the Haitian population. In her own education, Ms. Trouillot was the first and only candidate and grant holder within an academic program that placed disabled students in typical local schools; her experience there was such that she is now driven to promote and improve educational curriculums for disabled students nation-wide. Ms. Trouillot acknowledges that many people today simply “need tools [beyond academia] to face the needs of their own existence,” and hopes to use her time with WILD to organize and augment these means. Ms. Trouillot is a woman with a physical disability.

Saara Hirsi, Somalia
Oregon Commission for the Blind

Ms. Saara Hirsi, who is from Somalia, works with the Oregon Commission for the Blind, volunteers with Ride Connection to assist Somali people in learning English and receiving their GED. Ms. Hirsi is also a student at Portland Community College with plans to obtain her GED and eventually become a teacher. As a leader, Ms. Hirsi “would educate the mothers of girls with disabilities and tell them not to stop their daughters,” and would work to achieve “acceptance by society” for all, no matter their disabilities. Ms. Hirsi is a woman who is blind.

Samia Al-sayed, Syria
Afak Al-Routh
Japan International Cooperation Agency

Ms. Samia Al-sayed is a volunteer for the Japan International Cooperation Agency and a coordinator in the Afak Al-rouh organization, which is a new Syrian organization for women with disabilities in Damascus and rural Damascus. She gives lectures to other JICA members, leads workshops to teach various hand-crafts, and has recently begun to familiarize employees in her local hospital with the use of computers. Ms. Al-sayed recognizes poverty, lack of education, unemployment, and inaccessible public services as key problems within Syrian society, and is “trying with some of [her] colleagues to change these disadvantages especially in rural areas.” Ms. Al-sayed is a woman with a physical disability related to polio.

Isabel Escobar, Ecuador**National Federation of People with Disabilities, Partner with USAID**

Ms. Isabel Escobar is a member of the National Federation of People with Disabilities and also with USAID. She is apart of a coordination movement that comprises three provinces of Ecuador, and helps maintain the organizations' databases, leadership workshops, and monitoring the accounts of community banks. Ms. Escobar hopes to establish an NGO comprised of women with different disabilities in order to counteract gender inequalities, general discrimination, and unemployment. Ms. Escobar is a woman with a disability related to polio.

Karine Grigoryan, Armenia**Meghvik NGO**

Ms. Karine Grigoryan is a member of Meghvik NGO, which works to educate and involve children of all needs and abilities in varying clubs and activities. Ms. Grigoryan is a translator in the project department of the organization, as well as a project coordinator and promoter of the different events. Last year, she participated in the conference, "All Armenians are Able," which was held by the American Councils for International Education, and received a great response. Ms. Grigoryan is a woman with Cerebral Palsy.

Teuta Halilaj, Albania**Albanian Disability Rights Foundation**

Ms. Teuta Halilaj is a member of the Albanian Disability Rights Foundation (ADRF). ADRF was established in 1994 and works to promote equal opportunities and constant protection of human rights, in order to improve the quality of life of those with disabilities and that of their family members. Ms. Halilaj has a university degree, is self-employed, and is driven to continue the success of ADRF. Ms. Halilaj is a woman with a physical disability and is a wheelchair user.

Ukei Muratalieva, Kyrgyzstan**Disabled Children's Parents' Association**

Ms. Muratalieva is a volunteer with the Disabled Children's Parents' Association since its foundation in 1996, and has been an assistant to the Coordinator of Youth Movements since 2003. In this position, she helps organize, promote, and conduct educational seminars and training sessions. Her past work includes involvement in the 2000-2001 Danish UNICEF project "Say Yes for Children," where she was one out of only two volunteers with disabilities. Ms. Muratalieva is a woman with Cerebral Palsy.

Wendy Padilla, Honduras**Deaf Church of New Life**

Ms. Padilla is a member of the Deaf Church of New Life. Her work includes enabling families attend educational training sessions in sign language, and improve communication with their deaf and hearing children. She has studied various methods of initiating change, establishing confidence in marriage and child-raising and also simply understanding the seriousness of these two institutions. Ms. Padilla is a woman with a hearing disability.

Jenny Chinchilla, El Salvador**Fundacion Sendas**

Ms. Jenny Chinchilla is the founder and active member for Fundacion Sendas, which is an organization run by and for people with disabilities. Jenny works in the artistic and recreation areas. Jenny organizes trainings with an emphasis on women with disabilities in regards to human rights, self-esteem and communication. Jenny would like to “share my experiences in the program of WILD and I propose to work together [with others] to organize more activities and trainings for girls and women [with disabilities].” Ms. Chinchilla is a woman with a physical disability and is a wheelchair user.

Magda Ivonne Rios**Asociacion Colombiana de Sordociegos SURCOE**

Ms Magda Ivonne Rios is a member of Asociacion Colombiana de Sordociegos. Magda directs and coordinates a chorus of people who are Deaf/Blind. Ms. Rios is also a University student and the only woman who is Deaf/Blind at her University. Ms. Rios considers herself to be a proactive leader and is in charge of moving her organization forward. Upon her return home, Ms. Rios plans to replicate what she has learned at WILD with other women with disabilities in Colombia. Ms. Rios is a woman who is Deaf/Blind.

Eliane M. Mutesi, Rwanda**Action for Promotion of Local Initiatives for Development of Rwanda**

Ms. Eliane M. Mutesi is the Director of the Disabled Women’s Department within Action for Promotion of Local Initiatives for Development (APIBAD) in Kigali, Rwanda. She coordinates resources to provide financial support and emotional counseling to disabled men and women within her community, provides training in at-home activities (embroidery, soap-making, etc), and sustains educational programs to teach lessons in non-violent actions and self-respect. Ms. Mutesi has achieved a degree in law, and hopes to share her love for learning with her peers. She states, “Education is a master key to open a secured future with hope...what I see [and] learn is what I will teach and demonstrate to my fellow disabled.” Ms. Mutesi is a woman with a physical disability.